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AUTHOR Troester, Rod; Mester, Cathy Sargent
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ABSTRACT

A survey was conducted to examine the role of peace education within existing speech communication programs and to describe that role both in terms of curricular and research priorities. Respondents, 113 department Chairs out of a total of 578 on the Speech Communication Association's list of institutions offering degrees in communication, answered questions concerning (1) educator attitudes about the relationship between the discipline of speech communication and peace issues; (2) the inclusion of peace issues in collegiate programs and curricula; and (3) research priorities for examining peace issues from a communication perspective. The results indicated a significant range from zero peace communication curricular activity to full-fledged interdisciplinary majors. While most speech communication educators responding to the survey perceived a logical relationship between peace communication and their discipline, very few were actually teaching peace communication theory, history, or strategies. Those who are "teaching peace" are typically doing so within the scope of upper level courses in interpersonal and small group communication. There seems to be a perception that such instruction is inappropriate for or of little interest to the general student population. Although there is increasing activity in the broad area of peace studies in the university setting, for the most part that activity is under the leadership of some department or program other than speech communication. (Six references are attached.) (ARH)

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TEACHING PEACE IN THE COLLEGE SPEECH CLASS:

A SURVEY OF CURRENT PRACTICE

Rod Troester Cathy Sargent Mester

The Pennsylvania Sate University at Erie, The Behrend College
Division of Humanities and Social Sciences
Erie, Pennsylvania 16563-0500
(814) 898-6320

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The 1986 establishment of the SCA Peace Commission and concurrent increased activity in peace research has caused many of us in the communication profession to re-examine the relationships between speech communication and peace issues. As we explore the nature of those relationships, one subject that emerges is the possibility of teaching about peace and peacemaking in our communication classrooms. While much has been written about peace teaching in a general sense and in some specific disciplines, very little material speaks to a place for peace within a communication curriculum. The goal of this research was to learn the role of peace education within existing speech communication programs and to describe that role both in terms of curricular and research priorities.

BACKGROUND

Recent resolutions adopted by the National Education Association, the Canadian Teachers' Federation, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education exemplify the organized attention being given to peace education in general. The NEA has developed a curriculum for junior high school students about the combined issues of peace and nuclear war. In addition, they have a paid staff member whose title is "special assistant for peace programs and international relations." In Canada, the comparable teachers' organization devoted its entire 1985 conference to the possibilities of peace education. That conference generated specific guidelines for peace education in Canadian public schools which resulted in the adoption of a peace curriculum by twenty-seven local school boards. Few school boards in the United States have taken a similar route. However, in the state of Pennsylvania, the Department of Education

has for sixteen years been offering a five-week summer program to train teachers of nuclear science in the broad issues of nuclear conflict.

These examples all speak to the treatment of peace issues in secondary and elementary schools, but higher education has not been absent from the discussions. Many colleges and universities affiliated with churches (particularly Quaker, Mennonite, and Catholic) have traditionally offered courses and entire programs in peace. More and more public institutions of higher education are developing such programs as well. Their decision to do so seems consistent with the November, 1986 recommendation of the Carnegie Commission that the

> "aim of the undergraduate experience is not only to prepare the young to be productive, but also to enable them to live with dignity and purpose; not only to generate new knowledge, but to channel that knowledge to humane ends; not merely to study government, but to shape a citizenry that can promote the public good."

So, it is reasonable to observe that there is strong broad-based support for the inclusion of peace education in many levels of our educational system.

A review of peace programming listed in the curriculum guide Peace and World Order Studies (1984) reveals that college level peace education includes structured majors, minors, co-majors, independent study, associate degrees, and master's degrees. There is similar breadth noted in the academic departments responsible for peace programs. The traditional departments most often mentioned are Economics, Government, Foreign Languages, Religion, English, Sociology, Philosophy, and History. The relative absence of communication departments is noteworthy given that the goals for college level peace education typically include communication skills such as exercising influence, practicing decision-making, and resolving conflict.

Given the existence of the SCA Peace Commission, more of our colleagues must be involved in peace education than might be inferred from current docu-

ments on the subject. Therefore, our research question became, "To what extent are issues of peace being incorporated in the teaching and research activities of speech communication academicians?"

THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

A survey was constructed by the authors that addressed three principal areas: (a) educator attitudes about the relationship between the discipline of speech communication and peace issues; (b) the inclusion of peace issues in collegiate programs and curricula; and (c) research priorities for examining peace issues from a communication perspective. The survey instrument was distributed among the officers of the SCA Peace Commission for review and comment prior to its mass distribution to the SCA membership.

The survey accompanied by cover letter and return envelope was mailed during May of 1987 to 578 Chairs of departments on SCA's mailing list of institutions offering degree programs in communication. This sample was gleaned from the overall list by eliminating departments of theatre, speech pathology, film, and media studies.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

One hundred thirteen responses were received for a response rate of 20%. The respondents represented 93 programs offering undergraduate degrees, 109 programs offering both undergraduate and graduate degrees, and one program offering the associate degree. The sizes of the responding institutions were varied including 66 (59%) having under 5,000 students, 37 (32%) having between 5,000 and 15,000 students, and 10 (9%) having 15,000 or more students. Forty-six were private, church affiliated institutions, ten were private secu-

lar institutions, and the remaining fifty-seven were public colleges and universities. Geographically, responses were received from 40 departments in the Central States region, 33 in the Southern States region, 25 in the Eastern States region, and 15 from the Western States region. The individuals completing the surveys included 59 department/program chairs and 53 regular faculty. Only five (4.5%) of the respondents were members of the SCA Peace Commission.

RESPONSES:

Attitudes Toward Peace And Speech Communication

Ten Likert type items were used to assess educators' attitudes regarding the relationship between issues of peace and the discipline of speech communication. Three areas of this relationship were explored including: (a) instructor perceptions of students' relative interest in peace issues, (b) instructor perceptions of their obligations toward the discipline and issues of peace, and (c) general perceptions of peace issues.

Faculty opinions about current students' relative interest in peace issues were solicited via three items. Regarding the statement, "Students of today seem more concerned with issues of peace than students in the past," 19 respondents agreed; 85 disagreed; and 9 were uncertain. With the statement, "In communication courses we teach, issues of peace are becoming more evident," 21 agreed; 74 disagreed; and 18 were uncertain. Finally, regarding the statement, "Students today seem less concerned with issues of peace than students in the past," 72 respondents agreed; 29 disagreed; and 12 were uncertain. So, the general perception of speech communication faculty is that student interest in peace issues is waning.

Faculty attitudes about our professional obligations regarding issues of peace were sought via four other questions. Regarding the statement, "Communication educators have an obligation to address issues of peace given the nature of the discipline," responses included 82 agreements; 19 disagreements; and 12 uncertains. With the statement, "SCA should become more active in issues related to war and peace," 69 agreed; 18 disagreed; and 26 were uncertain. Regarding the statement, "With regard to issues of peace, communication educators ought to teach students to be advocates for their own ideas," 99 agreed; 7 disagreed; and 7 were uncertain. With the statement, "In discussing peace issues, instructors should remain objective and unbiased," 77 agreed; 25 disagreed; and 11 were uncertain. Our colleagues, therefore, support the notion of objectively teaching students principals of advocacy while also supporting the trend toward greater involvement in peace advocacy for the speech communication profession in particular. Unlike apparent student interest, faculty interest in peace issues seems to be increasing.

Finally, general attitudes about peace issues were surveyed via three items. Regarding the statement, "It is difficult to discuss peace issues without advocating a political position," 66 respondents agreed; 45 disagreed; and 2 were uncertain. To the statement, "Teaching students to be effective listeners is as important as teaching them to be advocates," 112 respondents indicated agreement; 2 indicated disagreement; and one indicated uncertainty. Regarding the statement, "The curriculum I/we teach has little to do with peace issues," 56 agreed; 55 disagreed; and 2 were uncertain. This last group of attitude items is indicative of the disparate and confusing points of view that seem prevalent among speech communication educators regarding the role of peace education.

Curricular and Co-curricular Programming on Peace

The existence of campus programs related to peace was determined by asking respondents three particular questions. First, respondents were asked about peace related programming sponsored by speech communication departments Sixteen indicated their departments had sponsored such programs (forums, debates, symposia) within the past year, while ninety-seven had not. Secondly, of the 113 responding institutions, sixty-nine indicated that other departments or offices on their campuses had sponsored some type of peace related program in the past academic year. Many included descriptions of peace-related campus programs. These included a symposium on "The Problem of Nuclear Knowledge;" guest lectures by poets, religious scholars, Nobel laureates, ambassadors, and refugees; a United Nations Day program; peace marches; folk singing; and debates about ROTC, Christian responsibility, terrorism, and specific arenas of international conflict. Finally, respondents were asked to assess whether peace-related interest on their campus had grown, remained the same, or declined. Eighteen respondents stated that general campus interest in peace issues seemed to have grown over the past 5-10 years, sixty-seven felt that interest had remained the same, and twenty-eight felt that interest had declined in that period. Evidently, general campus interest in peace issues has not changed significantly in recent years, but many new programs about peace are continuing to be developed and offered. The vast majority of such co-curricular programs are under the sponsorship of academic departments other than speech communication.

Twelve respondents reported that their speech communication departments

offer courses solely related to peace issues. Only two on these were at church-affiliated institutions. The specific courses offered were listed by such names as Conlict Management, Conflict and Negotiation, Communication and Conflict, Intercultural Communication, and Critical Issues. In order to get a clearer picture of how speech communication curricula relate to issues of peace, respondents were asked to rank order 6 traditional categories of speech communication courses in which issues of peace might be discussed. The average rank orders assigned to these categories are indicated in Table One (1 = course most likely to address peace issues; 5 = course least likely to address peace issues).

TABLE I

Public Speaking/Rhetoric	2.32
Small Group	3.01
Interpersonal	3.37
Mass Communication	3.47
Survey/Fundamentals	3.68
Theatre/Oral Interp.	5.10

Thus, of the standard categories in which speech communication departments typically offer coursework, the category of "public speaking" is most likely to include courses relating to peace issues and the category of "theatre" is least likely to include peace related coursework. Further, thirty speech communication departments offer courses containing units or segments that specifically address issues of peace. Fourteen of these departments were at church-affiliated institutions. Courses offered which contain units on peace included Group Process, Interpersonal Communication, History of Public Speaking, Introduction to Public Speaking, Political Communication, Business and Professional Speaking, Western Heritage, Communication Law, as well as several in the broader area of Conflict Management. While not a dominant element in speech

communication courses, peace as a rhetorical concept is being discussed in many courses.

Respondents were also asked about the likelihood of their departments including peacemaking skills in any of speech communication courses. The average rank order assigned to the courses are indicated in Table Two (1 = course most likely to include teaching about peacemaking skills; 5 = course least likely to teach about peacemaking skills).

TABLE II

Small Group	2.42
Interpersonal	2.52
Rhetoric/Public Speaking	2.81
Survey/Fundamentals	3.77
Mass Communication	4.17
Theatre/Oral Interp.	5.14

Peacemaking, like peace as a rhetorical issue, least likely to be included in courses in the theatre category. However, the areas in which courses were considered most likely to include peacemaking instruction were small group and interpersonal communication.

Research Interests in Speech Communication and Peace

The relative importance of various perspectives on the peace communication-speech communication connection is reflected in the respondents' relative weightings of peace communication research concerns. The survey asked that various peace research topics be rated on a 1-5 scale (1 = Not Important; 5 = Important). The research areas to be rated were determined by subjects suggested in the SCA Peace Commission newletter of April, 1987 (Vol. 1, #1). The average ratings indicated by respondents are identified in Table Three.

TABLE III

Conflict/Negotiation Skills	4.62
Communication's Role in Creating Violence and Nonviolence	4.29
Peace Negotiation as Deterrent to War	4.06
Mass Media and Peacemaking	4.05
Peace Through Persuasion	4.01
Rhetorical & Historical Studies of Peace Movements	3.87
International Initiatives for Peace	3.81
Definitions of Peace/Peacemaking	3.54
Classroom Communication and Peacemaking	3.30
Peace Comm. in Visual/Performing Arts	3.19
Performance of Peace Literature	3.11

Grouping the above research interests and priorities more broadly, we can see that respondents considered research in the area of negotiation and persuasion strategies to be of most importance, research in the social past and future of peace to be second in importance, and research in artistic renderings of peace to be of relatively less importance.

Finally, respondents were asked to state their own definitions of peace communication. While no two definitions of the sixty-four offered were exactly the same, it is possible to group the responses into broad categories based on the similarity of concepts noted. Fifty-two of the definitions were specific and clear enough to be categorized. Sixteen of those defined peace communication as a process of conflict management or conflict resolution. Nine defined peace communication as techniques appropriate for promoting non-violent, non-military solutions to world and national problems. Eight definitions were general statements about processes intended to promote interpersonal

or international understanding and harmony. Seven definitions described peace communication as techniques useful for achieving international or intercultural cooperation. The remaining six clear definitions were some combination of the above perspectives.

CONCLUSIONS

The attitudes that underlie programmatic decisions about including peace education in speech communication education seem to be quite mixed. While faculty themselves have many significant research interests in the issues of peace communication, they do not perceive that the general student population shares that interest. Consequently, while faculty feel it is proper to teach students principles of advocacy in a general sense, there is no clear mandate either for or against correlating peace education per se and speech education. In fact, there seems to be some philosophical confusion about such a correlation. This conclusion is evident from the conflicting attitudes exhibited as respondents generally agreed with the statement that we have an obligation to address issues of peace in the speech communication discipline, yet half of those indicated that the curriculum in which they teach (i.e. speech communication) has little to do with peace issues. Perhaps this discrepancy is one the Peace Communication Commission will need to address in the future.

Both curricular and extra-curricular programs reflect these attitudes. There is some peace programming happening on many campuses. But, by and large, it is not under the leadership of speech communication departments. Likewise, faculty surveyed seem to consider curricular offerings dealing with peace to be inappropriate for introductory survey courses taken by the general student population. Rather, such curricular focus should be in upper level courses in

the speech communication majors, if anywhere at all. Judging from the responses, one could assume that the treatment given to peace issues at that level would be more theoretical than practical or skills oriented. The one exception seems to be the inclusion of conlict negotiation skills in interpersonal and small groups courses. Since the term "peacemaking" is interpreted to mean conflict resolution more often than anything else (according to definitions given in the survey), it is interesting that faculty rated research in "peacemaking" to be significantly less important than that in conflict negotiation skills. This interpretation is another area that the Peace Commission may need to address as it attempts to clarify the relationship between speech communication and issues of peace.

That observation brings us back to some of the fundamental concerns that many educators have about actually teaching something called "peace." There is frequently a perception that teaching peace means a biased indoctrination of students based on the personal values of the instructor - an individual whom some further perceive very likely to be a throw-back to the "peaceniks" of the sixties. Such an instructional approach is perceived as educationally unethical. Some educators, in fact, assert that schools should teach only the uncontested values needed for citizenship (Ryerson). Since the definition of peace and hence its role as a "value" is certainly not uncontested, it should not be part of a curriculum. But, as speech communication educators, we realize that all values by their nature are contested. That being the case, are we not as justified in teaching about peace as we are about truth, beauty, honesty, etc? If we are justified in teaching about peace, what approaches might we use to do so? That is the dilemma to which this survey was addressed. The survey responses only begin to clarify the dilemma.

The responderts to this survey certainly felt strongly that there is a reasonable connection between speech education and peace education. It is also clear that the respondents felt this connection should be dealt with carefully. Do we "teach peace" as suggested by buttons evident at a recent ECA convention? Yes, but not all of us do it with the sense of urgent advocacy implied by the promoters of that catch phrase. Those speech communication faculty who do choose to pursue the connections between peace and speech communication are most likely to do so (a) by researching peace and peacemaking as global issues and (b) by teaching peace and peacemaking not to all students, but to those select advanced students studying interpersonal conflict management or political rhetoric.

Based on the results of this survey, it seems that several issues will need to be addressed by the SCA Peace Commission. First, clarity is needed in terms of what peace communication is. Is it concerned with the rhetoric of peace, managing conflicts, advocating positions, or understanding and cooperation. If we determine what it is, a second issue becomes how best to teach it in the context of a speech communication curriculum. Does it fall in the area of Interpersonal Communication, Small Group, Public Speaking, or Persuasion and Rhetoric? Finally, if we can determine what it is, we will inevitably have to address the ethical value-laden issues of how best to teach peace communication without becoming advocates for particular political positions. The questions raised by this survey suggest that the work of SCA's Peace Commission is important and valuable and will require considerable time and effort.

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ABSTRACT

The paper reports on the results of a national survey of communication educators concerning current instructional practices and attitudes regarding peace communication education. All member institutions of SCA were contacted and asked to indicate the classes, extracurricular programming, and courses of study sponsored by their departments which focus on peace communication.

The results indicated a significant range from zero peace communication curricular activity to full-fledged interdisciplinary majors. While most speech communication educators responding to the survey perceived a logical relationship between peace communication and their discipline, very few are actually teaching peace communication theory, history, or strategies. Those who are "teaching peace" are typically doing so within the scope of upper level courses in interpersonal and small group communication. There seems to be a perception that such instruction is inappropriate for or of little interest to the general student population. There is increasing activity in the broad area of peace studies in the university setting. But, for the most part, that activity is under the leadership of some department or program other than speech communication.

Demographically, there does not seem to be any signification correlation between university affiliation (public, private, church-related, secular) and the existence of peace studies in the speech communication department. There are differences, however, in the way those institutions defined peace communication. Finally, the paper suggests several continuing areas of research for peace/speech communication educators.

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